

Developing effective marketing brochure

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Bachelor's Thesis

Degree Programme in International

Business

2013



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<p>Following report is produced with a goal to develop effective marketing communication channel (brochure) for a case company. Report covers findings in the areas of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – model of communication – influences during communication process – target audience identification – decision-making process – types of decision-making process – role of marketing communication in decision-making – channels of marketing communication – practical recommendations from field expert <p>Report lets to take closer look at business-to-business market as well as at marketing communication's role there. Organizational buying behaviour pattern is supported by example of ABB logistics department with a help of interview and qualitative research that makes it possible to see the whole picture the way it is seen by customer company.</p>	
<p>Keywords marketing communication, problem solving, direct marketing, business-to-business, advertising, organizational communication</p>	

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1 Introduction

Modern business environment challenges enterprises in a way that they should stay clearly out of the crowd in order to be successful in their business activity. Numerous competitors in every niche try to use all possible marketing methods to be selected by potential customers. Despite the size of a companies and scale of their business they face pretty much the same challenges when attracting and retaining customers. When it comes to international business activities some challenges become crucial and can be a decision making factor in settling a deal with potential partners. Image is one of them. Image gives companies some value in potential partners' eyes and increases credibility to business relation. Therefore giving correct impression is very important.

1.1 Aim and research methods

Aim of this study is to develop marketing brochure for a Ukrainian-Finnish freight forwarding company. This mission will be completed by researching theoretical part from different related literature sources. As an addition to that practical research will be conducted. There is a strong need of combining theoretical part with practical in order to receive best possible outcome that will benefit the company. Practical part will include *semi-structured in-depth interview* with employee of logistics departments of industrial company from Finland (ABB). Mentioned research methods were chosen because according to Rubin& Rubin (2012, 29-31.) it enables to keep conversation going within the topic that I have chosen. Moreover, open-ended questions will provide me with personal experience of a person that is working in the industry my interest lies at. Person that I intend to contact has an insight on my topic of interest while theoretical sources provide me with general trends. Main aim of interview is to find out how do big industrial companies, like ABB, that might be potential customers of Ukrainian-Finnish freight forwarding company see an effective marketing brochure and what kind of content they expect to see there and in what form it should be offered to the readers. Probably the most important task apart from those mentioned before is to find out the actual readers of such content. As an outcome based on theoretical and practical research marketing brochure will be presented.

1.2 Company description

UFICO Ltd is a Ukrainian-Finnish freight forwarding company based in Kiev. Main activity includes cargo transport to and from Ukraine, local services and transports between third countries by road, air, sea and their combinations, door to door. Company's service portfolio includes also special shipments, heavy and oversized items as well as exhibition shipments and valuables.

UFICO Ltd is specialized in transit cargo traffic to CIS countries from Western Europe by trucking and from Far East and other countries by land-sea-land transportation via ports of Black Sea and Baltic Sea. Company organizes logistic services abroad in close cooperation with its partners worldwide. Personnel at UFICO have a long and wide experience in international and local forwarding and logistic services as well as good knowledge of CIS customs regulations.

UFICO Ltd offers to its customers:

- International road transports - Nordic and Baltic countries, Continental Europe and CIS
- Domestic transports - all destinations in Ukraine
- Air freight – around the world
- Sea freight – all continents
- Multi-modal (combined) transports
- Project shipments
- Over size and heavy weight cargo
- Fair and Exhibition shipments, valuables and other scheduled special transports
- Customs formalities
- Warehousing
- Safety/ security arrangements, police escorts, guardian, supervision
- Packing and packing material
- Cargo insurance

2. Basic model of communication

Over the years, a basic model of human communication has evolved. As it is shown on the Figure 1 sender and receiver represent two major participants of communication process. Message and tools are two major communication tools. Four others are the major communication and processes: encoding, decoding, response and feedback. The last element noise refers to any extraneous factors in the system that can interfere with the process and work against effective communication. (Steinberg, 1995, 16.)

The communication process begins with source's selection of words, symbols, pictures etc to represent the message that will be delivered to the receiver(s). This process is referred to as encoding and it involves putting information that is delivered to the recipient into symbolic form. The ultimate goal is to encode information in such a way that it will be easily understood by target audience. It infers using words, pictures, symbols that are familiar to the recipient. Process of encoding described above leads to message developing stage of communication process. The message may be verbal, nonverbal, oral or written, or symbolic. It is important to remember that message should be put into transmittable form that is appropriate for the chosen communication channel. (Steinberg, 1995, 16.)

The channel is a way that message is sent from the source to the recipient. At the broadest its meaning channel can be either personal or nonpersonal. Personal channel is basically face to face meeting with the target audience. Nonpersonal channel is the one that carries a message without interpersonal contact between sender and receiver. It is generally referred to as the mass media or mass communications, since the message is sent to a large audience at once. When message is encoded and sent through the chosen communication channel it reaches the receiver. Receiver is the person(s) with whom sender\source shares information. In other words receivers are consumers in target markets or audiences that read, hear and\or see the sender's message and decode it. Decoding is a process of transforming the sender's message back into thought. This process is strongly influenced by the recipient's field of experience, which refers to receiver's experiences,

perceptions, attitudes, values etc he or she brings to the communication situation. (Steinberg, 1995, 16.)

In order to achieve effectiveness of the communication process, recipient's message decoding process should match sender's encoding. Effective communication is more likely to happen when there is a common ground between sender's and recipient's fields of experiences. In other words, the more knowledge the sender has about the receivers, the better the sender can understand their needs, empathize with them and communicate effectively. Throughout the whole process of communication the message is affected by external environment factors that can distort or interfere with its reception. That distortion is known as noise. Errors that occur during the encoding process, distortion in radio or television signal or distraction at receiving are referred to as noise. It can also occur if sender's and recipient's fields of experience do not overlap. Lack of common ground can result in improper encoding, choosing wrong transmission channel or even in having completely different meaning to the receiver. After receiver received message, certain reaction is expected. It is referred to as a response. Its forms can vary from nonobservable actions such as memorizing the information that was received to immediate action, for example contacting sender's office. (Steinberg, 1995, 16.)

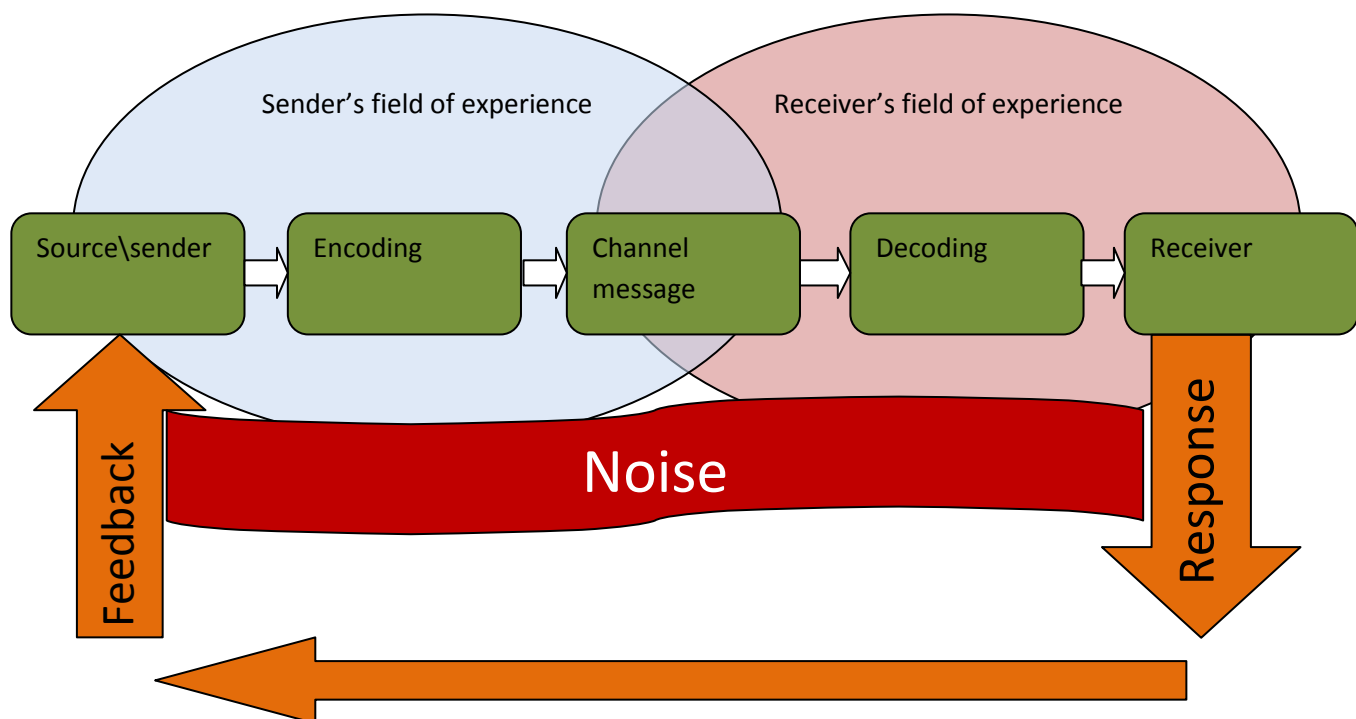


Figure 1. The Shannon and Weaver model of the Communication process (Adapted from Shannon&Weaver, 1949).

2.1 Environmental influences on buyer information processing

As it is illustrated in Figure 2 buyer is influenced by many factors during the information processing stage. For example culture background, social class, context of communication, situational influences and groups. Culture encompasses the norms, beliefs, artifacts and customs that are learned from society and that constitute its values. It has been referred to as the unique characteristics that identify the acceptable patterns of behavior and social relations within a particular society. Culture is acquired or learned. It cannot be instinctive. It sets rules for all members belonging to this culture. For marketing communication culture should be seen as a communication system. By using verbal and non-verbal actions a society is maintaining stability, binds all members of society with a sense of identity and provides them with means of continuity. Within any given culture there are always a number of sub-cultures. Mainly these include age, geography, race, religion and ethnic groupings and all of them can influence the way marketing communications are perceived and understood. (Fill, 2005, 142.)

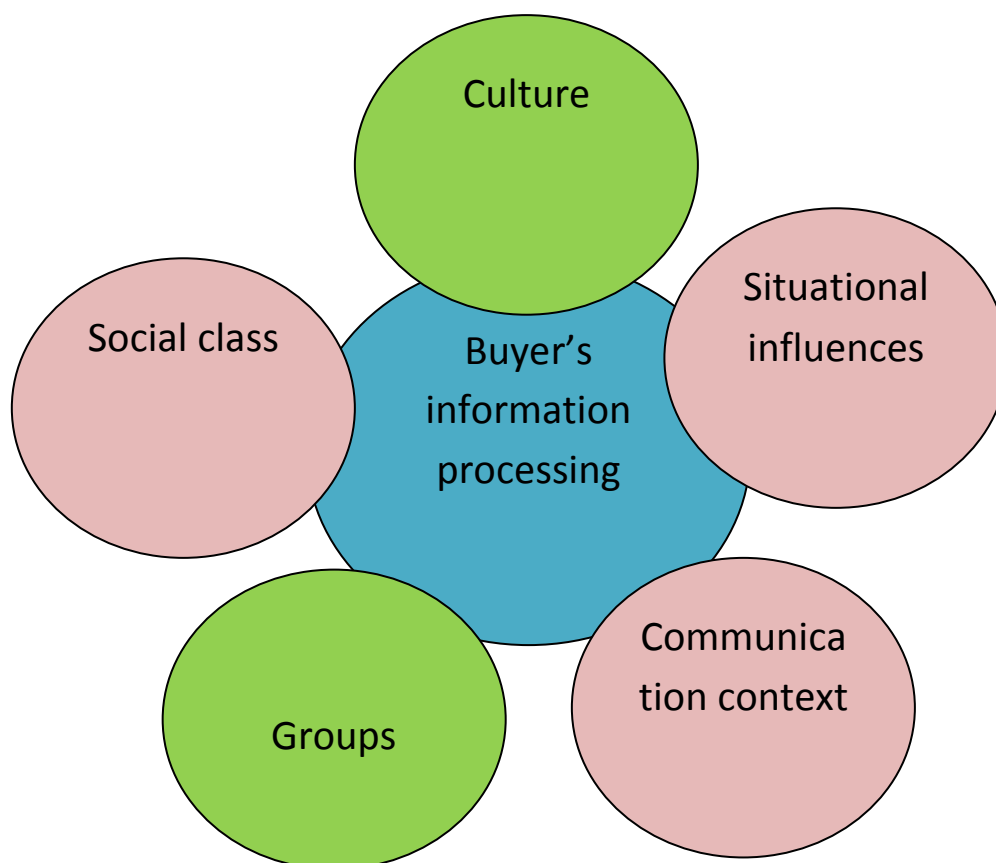


Figure 2. Environmental influences on buyer information processing (Fill, 2005, 142).

Majority of societies are stratified by class, based on power, prestige, and wealth. Society values individuals inside it basing on criteria such as education, income level, occupation. All this information is filtered into social class system that is divided into upper, middle, and lower classes. (Fill, 2005, 142.)

One of the primary factors influencing learning and socialization are groups. An individual may simultaneously be a member of several groups that are having different degree of effect on him. According to Fill (2005, 142) groups can be categorized:

- Ascribed groups: those to which individual belongs automatically, e.g. family.
- Primary\secondary groups: groups where interaction is on a one-to-one basis, e.g. family and friends.
- Formal and informal groups: where the presence or absence of hierarchy and structure defines the groups activity.
- Aspirational\membership groups: groups to which the individual wishes to belong or does belong.

Fill (2005, 142) underlines importance of taking into consideration the fact that each customer when making buying decision for a specific buying situation is influenced by a unique set of factors. These factors might not be necessarily related to a product or the individual itself. Context of buying situation is affecting customer's information-processing capability. As an example Fill (2005, 142) provides amount of light in a store and store traffic because both factors are influencing amount of time given for decision-making.

2.2 Identifying the Target Audience

In order to make company's marketing effort effective it is important to identify the audiences that will be addressed. The target audience may consist of individuals, groups, niche markets, market segments or general public and mass audiences as it is illustrated on Figure 3.

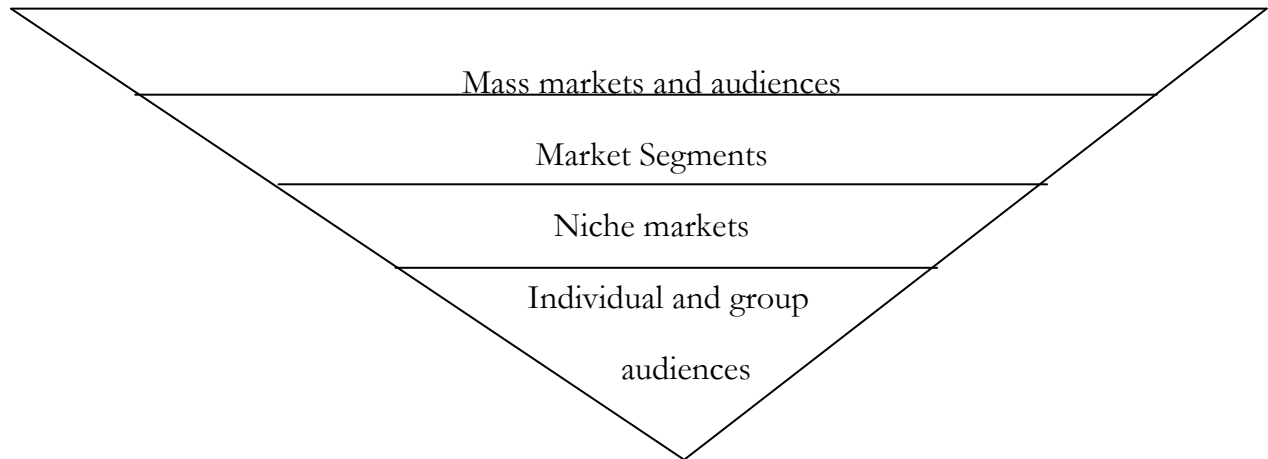


Figure 3. Levels of Audience Aggregation (Belch, 2009, 145).

According to (Belch, 2009, 145) first level of customer aggregation is represented by individuals with specific needs and for whom marketing effort should be specifically tailored. This often requires person-to-person communication and is generally implemented through personal selling. Other forms of communication such as advertising can be used in order to attract person's attention, but main part of communication is done by a salesperson that responds to individual's needs in face-to-face contact.

A second level of audience aggregation is represented by the groups. Very often marketing efforts are aimed at groups of people who make the actual purchasing decision. For example, organizational buying involves purchasing centres or committees that are different in size and composition. For companies that market their products and services to the organizations should bear in mind who in the target company is in charge of making purchasing decision, what criteria they use when evaluating offers etc. (Belch, 2009, 145.)

Very often marketers look for customers who have similar needs and wants and represent some kind of market segment due to their similarities and can be easily addressed with the same basic communication approach. Small well-defined groups of customers are often referred to as market niches. Normally they can be contacted through personal-selling efforts or highly targeted media such as direct mail. Next level of customer aggregation is market segments. They are bigger than market niches but can be contacted through the same communication channels. (Belch, 2009, 145.)

The highest level of customer aggregation is often referred to as mass market and audiences. Marketers attempt to address audiences in mass markets with the help of mass communication in for of advertising or publicity. Important feature of mass communication is that it is one-way flow of information from the marketer to consumer. Feedback on audience's reaction to the information that was sent normally is difficult to measure. (Belch, 2009, 145.)

3. General buying decision-making process

Figure 4 shows five stages of general buying decision-making that customer goes through. Marketing communication can impact upon on any or all of the following stages with varying level of effectiveness.

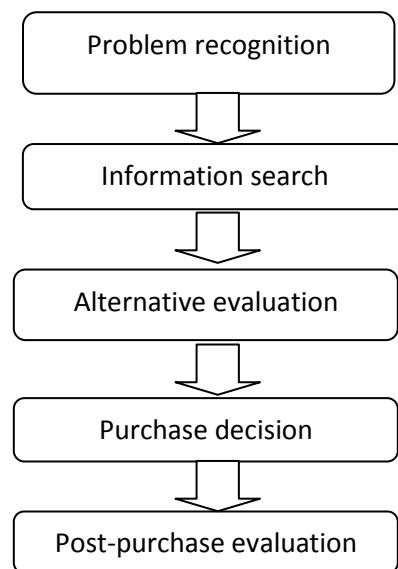


Figure 4. Five general stages of a buyer's purchase decision process. (Kotler& Armstrong, 2010, 177).

Problem recognition stage occurs when there is a difference between buyer's ideal state and reality. The difficulty in getting buyers to recognize that they have a problem invites the question: do they really have a problem? If there is no actual need, than it is not marketing but selling that is being practiced. (Kotler& Armstrong, 2010, 177.)

Kotler& Armstrong (2010, 177) state that after identifying a problem buyer will search for information in attempt to resolve it. When it comes to this stage there are two search patterns buyer can follow:

- Internal search
- External search

Internal search involves a memory scan to recall experiences and knowledge while external is used when internal search was unsuccessful. It can involve family, friends, the web, reference sources, advertising etc. If information search was successful potential solutions need to be evaluated in order to make the optimum choice. Those feasible options constitute the preference set, and it is from seven or eight products that a smaller group of products is normally assembled. This smaller group of products is referred as the evoked set and from this group consumers make a choice. Attributes used to constitute these sets are referred to as evaluative criteria. Very often nature of these attributes is both objective and subjective. (Kotler& Armstrong, 2010, 177.)

3.1 Types of consumer decision-making

As a matter of fact, buyers do not always follow the general decision sequence at all times. The flow of decision-making process may vary depending on amount of time available, levels of perceived risk and the degree of involvement a buyer has with the type of product. According to Pelsmacker (2007, 98) There are following types of problem-solving:

- Extended problem solving
- Limited problem solving
- Routinized response behaviour

Extended problem solving refers to the situations when consumers undertake great amount of external search activity and spend a lot of time looking for the solution that satisfies as closely as possible, the evaluation criteria is previously set. Mostly this activity is associated with unfamiliar products, direct experiences and knowledge about which are relatively weak and also there is certain level of involvement of financial risk. In cases like this marketing communication should aim to provide a lot of information to assist the decision process.(Pelsmacker, 2007, 98.)

Knowing something about product means that better use can be made of internal memory-based search routines, and the external search can be limited to obtaining up-to-date information or ensuring that better points of decision were investigated.(Pelsmacker, 2007, 98.)

For a great amount of products decision-making process will only consist of internal search. The reason is that buyer has made many similar purchases and thus accumulated a great deal of experi-

ence. Hence, only internal search is needed, so little time and effort will be spent on external information search activities. Mainly low-value items that are frequently purchased fall into this category e.g. toothpaste, soap, confectionery. (Pelsmacker, 2007, 98.)

3.2 Role of marketing communication in decision-making

When considering employee-oriented communications, according to Fill (2005, 233), important thing is to remember its two components:

- Emotional component
- Intellectual component

Intellectual element is concerned with the audiences engaging with a brand on the basis of processing rational, functional information. And the emotional element is concerned with audiences engaging and aligning with a brand's value on the basis of emotional and expressive information. Hence communication strategies should be based on the information processing styles of audiences and their access to preferred media. Successful marketing communication reflects a suitable balance between the need for rational to meet intellectual needs and expressive types of communication to meet emotional needs in an organization's different audiences. (Fill, 2005, 233.)

In order to understand role of marketing communication DRIP model is used. It is based on the idea that marketing communications can be used to differentiate, reinforce, inform or persuade audiences to think or behave in a particular way. Table 1 illustrates DRIP model in more detail.

Table 1. DRIP model (Fill, 2012, 35).

Role	Tasks	Explanation
Differentiate	Attribute whole product	To make product or service stand out in the category
Reinforce	Remind, reassure	To consolidate and strengthen previous messages and experiences
Inform	Make aware, educate	To make known and advise of availability and features
Persuade	Purchase, further enquiry	To encourage further positive purchase-related behavior

3.3 Direct mail

Direct mail has always been an essential part of communication mix in business-to-business sector. This method can be used as a support of personal selling by building awareness, enhancing image, establishing credibility and taking orders, as well as providing levels of customer management. Significance of this method cannot be doubted even though it is being surpassed by the use of the Internet and e-commerce practices. (Fill, 2005, 877.)

It would be reasonable to evaluate the effectiveness of direct mail. Normally it is done through measuring the response rate, but not entirely satisfactory because there are many stages through which goes recipient of direct mail: opening, scanning (re)reading and response. It is suggested that there are three main parts of the process. The first is opening behavior that is influenced by attractiveness of the envelope and situational factors. Reading behavior is influenced by the opening behavior, the reader's situational characteristics and the attractiveness of the mailings and its contents. The final behavior concerns the response generated, which is influenced by the attractiveness of the offer, by reading behavior and the characteristics of the individual reader and their situation. It was found that attractiveness of the envelope had influence on opening behavior as well as its size, material and even type of postage. Surprisingly, the volume of direct mail each manager received had no impact on opening behavior. (Fill, 2005, 877.)

In addition to mentioned above Kotler and Armstrong (2010, 518) suggest using customer databases. Customer databases are organized collections of detailed customers' data. Databases provide companies with an information that enables them to look at their customers from different angles (e.g. geographic, demographic, psychographic etc.) and fine-tune their marketing attempts.

Advantages of direct marketing are as follows (Belch, 2009, 475-476) :

- Selective reach. Direct marketing lets advertisers to reach bigger audience and helps to reduce or eliminate waste coverage. While not everyone drives on high-ways where there are billboards or pays attention to TV-commercials, virtually everyone receives mail.
- Segmentation capabilities. Marketers can purchase list of recent product purchasers, car buyers, bank-card holders etc. These lists enable segmentation on different basis: location, occupation, job title.

- Frequency. May not be easily accomplished for mail though, since consumers may be annoyed to receive the same mail repeatedly.
- Flexibility. Direct marketing can be implemented in variety of creative forms.
- Timing. Direct response advertising can be much more timely than other media that require long-range planning and have long closing dates. Direct mail can be put together and distributed to the target audience very quickly.
- Personalization. No other advertising medium can personalize the message as well as direct media.
- Costs. Because of low cost of media, each sale generated is very inexpensive.
- Measures of effectiveness. Feedback is always immediate and accurate.

Disadvantages of direct marketing are as follows (Belch, 2009, 475-476):

- Image factors. Mail segment of advertising industry is often referred to as junk mail.
- Accuracy. As it was mentioned direct marketing can be highly personalized but it depends on the accuracy of mailing lists used.
- Content support.
- Rising costs. As postal rates increase, direct-mail profits are immediately and directly impacted. Same is true for print costs, which push up costs of direct-response advertising.

4. Nature of Business Markets

One distinguishing characteristics of a business-to-business market is that the customer role is played by an organization rather than a private individual. Businesses and private individuals often buy same kind of products e.g. laptop computers, cleaning services, automobile repair services etc. So it is hard to distinguish between a business market and a consumer market based on the nature of products that are purchased. Of course there are certain types of products that will never be bought by private individuals and are frequently bought by the organizations (e.g. industrial cranes). On the other hand it is rather hard to come up with an idea of something that is bought by a private individual and will be never bought by and organization. (Brennan, Canning& McDowell, 2011, 5.)

4.1 Communication between Organizations

Whether we like it or not companies are still in constant communication process. The switch-board, CEO appearing on TV, presentation of technical achievements or getting over failures, messages from company's spokesperson all are forms of company communication. (Michel, 2003, 268)

Many recipients that vary between having close or distant relations with a company and receive communication from or concerning company. According to the communication received they form representation (image) of the transmitter (company) either directly, through the messages that are spread in an organized or spontaneous way. In other words, brand image or company image is the construction and interpretation in person's mind, from the information received—which include us of its offers—of representation what the transmitter is. Image determines recipient's attitudes (opinions) and behaviour (buy, reject, expect) in relation to the company.

4.2 Organizational buying

Organizational buying involves contribution from many of the professional specialities in the company. Organization is dependent on decision makers and influencers at many company levels and from different disciplines that contribute their expertise to satisfy a diverse set of needs. Stakeholders' contributions aim to ensure that optimal purchasing decisions are made for the company. Individual contributors may benefit buying process with their expertise to influence the decision process without full knowledge or approval from other stakeholders. It is rather rare that one individual is entirely responsible for an organization purchase decision. This decision requires communication between parties within the buying organization. It is necessary for a supplying organization to bear in mind that all influencers in buying organization should be addressed simultaneously with a message that is tailored to the needs of every individual influencer. (Vitale, Gliglerano & Pfoertsch, 2011, 55-56.)

4.3 The buying centre

According to Vitale et al. (2011, 56-57) the buying centre is a group of individuals with a stake in the buying decision making process or in other words, individuals that contribute to the final purchase decision. Parties involved in the buying centre determine, within their own professional responsibilities, the company's needs and the methods used in order to satisfy them. Complexity of the buying centre is dependent on complexity of the need. Depending on a size and organizational structure of the organization stakeholders may be physically dispersed at a great distance from each other. In this case a very important task for a business marketer is to simultaneously but individually influence all stakeholders by satisfying their individual professional and personal needs.

As many companies have moved toward more integration of supply chains, and their buying centres have undergone a makeover and evolved into more formalized cross-functional teams that are using more strategic approach to supply issues. As a result buying process itself changed and became more tight and predictable. Good news for suppliers is that now companies are rather willingly practising long-term commitments with their suppliers. The down-side of this change is that selection criteria of supplier have gone up and perspective suppliers need to show their willingness to adjust their operational process in accordance with their customers' requirements. But after taking a better look at this change it appears that those long-term commitments with high selec-

tion criteria are rather win-win situations for both parties than a burden for a supplier. (Vitale et al., 2011, 57.)

4.4 Participants in buying decision making process

As it was mentioned above, buying centre is a complicated unit that strongly relies on efficient communication between members for sake of achieving the best possible outcome in order to benefit corporate needs. (Vitale et al., 2011, 57) These are participants that are generally represented in buying centres, as follows (Kotler& Armstrong, 2010, 198.):

- Users. Member of organization that will use the actual product or service. In many cases can initiate buying proposal and helps defining product specifications
- Influencers. As well as users can help to define product specifications. Provides relevant information for evaluating buying alternatives. Generally technical personnel are regarded as strong influencer in the organizations.
- Buyers. Members of the buying team that has an authority to select a supplier and arrange purchasing terms. Their major role is selecting vendors and negotiating but they can also help to shape product specification.
- Deciders. Members with formal or informal power to select or approve the final suppliers. In the routine buying decider or at least approver role goes to buyers.
- Gatekeepers. Control information flow that reaches other member of the buying centre. Or for example gatekeepers can prevent salespersons from seeing the users or deciders.

4.5 Organizational buyers' decision process: a stepwise model

Figure 5 shows main phases that corporate buying decision making process goes through. According to Vitale et al. (2011, 58) this figure only looks simple as some of the most crucial buying decision making aspects are not mentioned in the figure but should be always in marketer's mind. For example figure does not illustrate importance of individual roles and personal needs of people inside the buying centre. There are three kinds of needs as follows:

- Organization's needs for benefit from product or service once it is bought at consumed. This need includes the technical specifications, performance requirements, and some other elements of quantitative and qualitative nature.
- Individual's need that originates from his role in the buying centre. Every stakeholder is a professional in his/her field and is expected to perform the functions of his job so that they support organization's needs. These might be: obtaining the best design for component parts, favourable contract terms, highest quality materials etc.
- Buying centre member's personal needs which are often overlooked and not taken into consideration. Every member of the buying centre as a professional seeks satisfaction for career success, recognition and quality of life factors.

Figure 5 might be somehow misleading in a way that buying process does not necessarily through all the stages step-by-step as it is illustrated. According to Vitale et al. (2011, 58) the buying process is simultaneous, not sequential or in other words some stages can be gone through simultaneously in a slightly mixed way that breaks the illustrated order.

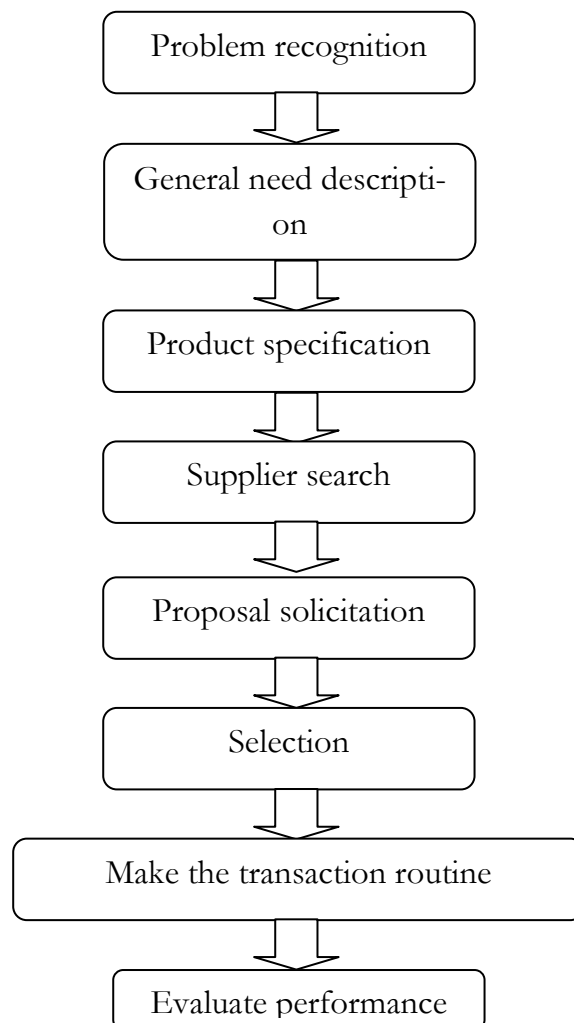


Figure 5. Steps in Organizations' buying decision process. (Vitale et al., 2011, 58).

4.6 Organizational buyers decision process: a process flow model

Buying decision making process for particularly new task purchases goes as it is illustrated in the Table 2 but with significant overlaps and feedback loops without clear border between steps.

Table 2 Stages in the Process flow Model of the Buying Decision Process(Vitale et al., 2011, 57).

Process Flow Stages	Buying Decision Process—Steps
Definition stage <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Problem definition• Solution definition• Product specification	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Problem recognition• General need description• Product specification
Selective Stage <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Solution provider search• Acquire solution provider(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supplier/source search• Proposal solicitation• Contract for supplier(s)
Deliver Solution Stage <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Customize as needed• Install/train/test	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make the transaction routine
Endgame Stage <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operate solution• Reach end result• Evaluate outcomes• Determine next set of needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluate performance• Resell the job

First attempts of buying centre to learn more about organization's needs and about what alternatives are available to satisfy those needs. As it is shown in Table 2 definition stage consists of the following activities:

- Recognizing and defining the company's problem
- Defining the broad outlines of a solution
- Specifying the product or service features sought

Stage is over when the first quantification of what is specifically thought is performed. Specification may be edited on later stages, but it sets the organization's buying centre on a path with a specific direction. The most important thing about the definition stage is that it includes `problem recognition, ` that determines how the rest of the buying decision making process is carried out by

the buying centre. Problem recognition is ‘consumer need awareness,’ but at the corporate level. The way problem is defined by the buying centre determines whether problem is approached as a familiar or an unfamiliar task. This set of things give a chance for several extremes to happen: the problem and its possible solutions may be treated as a completely *new task*. In this case buying decision making can be more thorough and time consuming. Another extreme is finding out that all company needs was received from previous purchases. As a result *straight rebuy* happens. This kind of conclusion lets to organize less time- and-resource consuming process. Between those two extremes lies modified rebuy. This determination leads to a buying process when numerous alternatives are revised but within a limited scope. (Vitale et al., 2011, 60-61.)

Once buying centre is aware of organization’s needs and products/services that can satisfy those needs buying process moves into selection stage. Choice of vendor might be simplified in case when vendor has collaborated with the buyer throughout the specification process. (Vitale et al., 2011, 61-62.)

After being chosen vendor starts delivering its promises. This process may take longer than two previous stages combined because often product is complex and requires adjusting, customization and even technical development. Delivery stage ends when vendors complete his part of a deal and performance is evaluated by the purchasing organization. (Vitale et al., 2011, 65.)

All mentioned activities has one primary goal—to provide the purchasing company with the products, materials or services needed for reaching purchasing organization’s goals. Many companies are using standardized scorecards for evaluating different vendors. Supplier’s performance is also evaluated by the individuals inside the buying centre. (Vitale et al., 2011, 66.)

4.7 Advertising and b2b

Apart from increasing use of online advertising, the most important form is print advertising in newspapers and trade journals. Probably the most important role of advertising in this case is to inform and remind, while differentiation and persuasion are delivered through other tools of communication mix—sales promotion and personal selling. (Fill, 2005, 877.)

4.8 Print media and b2b

Print media is a good mean for recruitment advertising, and for many bigger companies it is a valuable tool for communicating their corporate values and to enhance reputation. Use of catalogues is well established in b2b and even rapid rise of the Internet did not cause big distraction for organizational buyers. Catalogue is a good source of organization's product range, especially when compared to a web-site. (Fill, 2005, 877.)

5. Research methods

Research is a process that involves creating new knowledge. The outcome and main purpose of any research is evidence. In the end sense should be made of found evidence. In people's understanding word 'evidence' is used in two main ways. First refers to the outcomes of scientific research, normally conducted in the form of experiments or other carefully controlled investigations. Main goal of these investigations is to get 'proven results of potentially great importance'. Second way of using word 'evidence' refers to courts of law and juridical enquiries. (Gillham, 2000, 2-3.) For this case study second understanding of word 'evidence' is not relevant hence it will not be used and referred to.

5.1 Qualitative and quantitative research methods

According to Gillham (2000, 9) research can be conducted by using methods that are divided in two ways as follows:

- quantitative research methods
- qualitative research methods

Quantitative methods are those that involve counting and measuring. It is mostly related to statistics that in its turn can be of two kinds Gillham (2000, 9):

- descriptive
- inferential

By 'descriptive statistics' normally are understood things like averages that are also referred to as 'means' that describe data in a summarizing way. On the other hand inferential statistics are those enabling you to draw meaningful and significant inferences from quantitative data. Gillham (2000, 9.)

According to Gillham (2000, 10) qualitative research methods are essentially descriptive and inferential in character and thus are often regarded as 'soft'. Nevertheless description and inferences are necessary in scientific research. Situation might occur when significant statistical results might be obtained but they have to be described and interpreted because facts do not speak for themselves and a good explanation is needed.

Qualitative methods focus primarily on the kind of evidence that helps you to understand and interpret the meaning of things going on. A great strength of these methods is that they can illuminate issues and give explanations and interpretations. Gillham (2000, 10.)

According to Gillham (2000, 11) qualitative methods enable as follows:

- To carry out an investigation where other methods—such as experiments are either not practicable or not ethically justifiable
- To investigate situations where little is known about what is there or what is going on. More formal research may come later.
- To explore complexities that are beyond the scope of more 'controlled' approaches.
- To 'get under the skin' of a group or organization to find out what really happens—the informal reality which can only be perceived from the inside.
- To view the case from the inside out: to see it from the perspective of those involved.
- To carry out research into the process leading to results rather than into the 'significance' of the results themselves.

As it was mentioned by Gillingham (2000, 11) those things listed above are strong characteristics and represent a powerful argument in favour of using qualitative methods to answer certain questions in some settings. On the other hand author warns to bear in mind and be clear about the philosophical base. According to Gillingham (2000, 11) there three main points as follows:

- Human behaviour, thoughts and feelings are partly determined by their context. If you want to understand people in real life, you have to study them in their context and in the way they operate.

- ‘Objective’ research techniques—abstracted, controlling—can produce results that are artefacts of the method used. An artefact is something arising only because of the method used and cannot be considered as results of a successful research.
- How people behave, feel, think, can only be understood if you get to know their world and what they are trying to do in it. ‘Objectivity’ can ignore data important for an adequate understanding.

5.2 Targets of qualitative research

As any other research qualitative research methods require presenting certain results that were obtained. In qualitative research they can be of two kinds as follows (Gillingham, 2000, 11):

- evidence
- theory

No matter how imperfect facts obtained might be they still need to be understood and explained (theory). Theories are certain explanations created by the researches. They can be either created by modifying an existing theory or from the scratch. But theory is not primary aspect of a research. Evidence is something that enables a theory to be grounded. In the reality evidence can be of various kinds of which none is perfect as follows (Gillingham, 2000, 12-13, 21):

- Documents. Letters, policy statements, guidelines. They provide a formal framework to which you may have to relate the informal reality.
- Records. Things that go back in time can provide valuable longitudinal perspective on the present situation.
- Interviews. Unfortunately this is an inadequate term for the range of ways in which people can give you information. It might not be necessarily a formal interview but a short spontaneous discussion instead.
- Detached observation. Its main use is where you need to be more systematic in how you observe. It is very different from participant observation.

- Participant observation. It gives more of insight into the on-going process because an observer is 'in' and nothing can prevent observation. A very important part of this kind of observation is to keep a written record.
- Physical artefacts. These simply are things that were made or produced during observation period.

5.3 Naturalistic data-gathering techniques

Naturalist research paradigm emphasizes the importance of context, of complexity and of examining situations in which numerous factors interact. Naturalists accept that there is a reality but they argue that it cannot be measured directly, only perceived by people, each of whom views it through 'own lens' of previous experience, knowledge and expectations. That 'lens' affects what people see and how they interpret findings. Naturalists' core postulate is that what we know is not objective; it is always filtered through people, always subjective. Naturalistic researchers in their explorations use a variety of techniques such as participant observation, documentary and conversational analysis, and interviews. Often methods are combined in a single project. (Rubin& Rubin, 2012, 15.)

5.3.1 Participant observation

This method evolved as a more formal version of simple watching what others do and only at times joining in. Participant observation extends ordinary activity by recording what is seen and heard in order to use it for later more formal analysis of patterns and behaviour. In participant observation studies level of observer's involvement impacts what is seen. The more active observer is the less time is for observing and it is harder to figure out what would have happened had the observer been not present. Participant observation is a valuable tool to use prior interviewing. It helps to familiarize you with the environment and the language, and allows future interviewees to know interviewer a bit better before he/she starts asking questions. (Rubin& Rubin, 2012, 26.)

5.3.2 Documentary analysis

Another approach that is based on documents examination—including newspapers, speeches, budgets, transcripts of meeting, personal and public letters, Internet posts and blogs, novels, diaries, and anything that appears in a written form as well as pictures or even video recordings. Documents are most useful when combined with in-depth interviews. It allows you to discuss with their creators what they contain and how they were prepared. The downside of documentary analysis is that nearly every documentary archive is spotty and incomplete. It means that amount of attention to different topics was not divided evenly and some areas had preferences over the others. (Rubin& Rubin, 2012, 27-28.)

5.3.3 Conversational and narrative analysis

Sometimes conversations, narratives and stories are analysed mostly with a focus on the communication process itself. *Conversational analysis* explores how people talk to each other in naturally occurring situations like chatting at the grocery store, on the street, during the job interviews etc. During research process data is recorded and transcribed. Researchers include words spoken; indicate time gaps, pauses, incomplete thoughts etc. *Narrative analysis* examines people's descriptions of their experiences that are told in story form. Narrative analysis mostly concentrates on how people make meaning out of their experiences, how they interpret them and how they share own experiences with others. (Rubin& Rubin, 2012, 28-29.)

5.3.4 In-depth qualitative interviews

Primary qualitative research tool is in-depth interviewing. It can be of many kinds but all of them share three main characteristics as follows (Rubin& Rubin, 2012, 29.):

- Researcher is looking for examples, experiences, for narratives and stories but not simple yes-or-no, agree-or-disagree responses.

- Questions asked are open-ended, meaning interviewee can respond in any way he or she chooses, elaborating answers when needed.
- Question set is not fixed. Interviewer can adjust order of questions, substitute existing questions with those that arise during a conversation and are more relevant to the subject discussed.

According to Rubin & Rubin (2012, 30-31) there are four different kinds of qualitative interviews as follows:

- Focus groups. Group of individuals representing one population whose ideas are of interest for the researcher are brought together for a discussion that is facilitated by the researcher. Conversation goes inside the group and only at times when needed the researcher tosses in questions that will move conversation along. In the end group is encouraged to come to a conclusion.
- The Internet interview is a very handy tool for communicating with people who are either hard to reach geographically or is not willing to talk publicly. Compared with face-to-face interviews, Internet interviews are rather slow.
- Casual conversations and in-passing clarifications. These types of interview take place when during research process researcher's and interviewee's paths cross. During these often very short meet-up some open-ended questions are asked. These are rather informal methods of interviewing and it is somehow inappropriate to pose complicated questions. Idea of the interview process to find out missing information.
- Semi-structured and unstructured interviews. These are the core elements of in-depth qualitative interviews that can be carried out in a responsive style that is characterised by flexible questioning pattern, evolving of questions in response to what was just said by the interviewees and in general questions are tailor-made for each individual interviewee in order to match their experiences. Both types take place as a scheduled, extended conversation between interviewer and interviewee. Aim of *semi-structured interview* is to investigate specific topic while during *unstructured interview* general topic is in researcher's mind.

6. Interview

In order to make my research effort up to date and more precisely developed I have conducted an interview with an employee of a big industrial company called ABB. My contact person was Logistics Manager of Drives department Ms Carita Nybergh. I have chosen to contact her because in her day activities at work she deals with companies that are providing same kind of services as my case company. As she explained to me their department's main activity includes dealing with spare parts. According to Ms Nybergh this business' main requirement is delivering product to customers in a fast and efficient way because customers' businesses rely on it.

As it was mentioned by Ms Nybergh their department is constantly contacted by freight forwarding service providers. Main readers of such content are the employees of logistic department. During interview Ms Nybergh confirmed Fill's (2005, 877) statement that amount of incoming mail did not influence their opening behaviour. Main factors influencing opening behaviour were company names that were mostly familiar to her. She added though that she remembered one new company that sent their advertising material that attracted her attention. Mainly, because it was printed on expensive paper and was giving posh image, probably, way too expensive advertising for a company that was new to the market. According to Ms Nybergh it gave a wrong image about the company: they spend a lot of money on expensive advertising materials even when they are not sure if they get any reply at all. Needless to say that ABB tried to avoid any kind of commitments with that company.

According to Ms Nybergh decision making process goes through all stages as it was mentioned by Vitale et al. (2011, 58). Roles in buying centre are distributed among participants as it was mentioned by Kotler& Armstrong (2010, 198). During the interview it was found out that participants of buying decision making unit are dispersed geographically that gives extra challenge for making optimal choice as it was mentioned by Vitale et al. (2011, 56-57). While user is located in Finland decision makers are located in Switzerland. It was mentioned though that users have a right to suggest a service provider that they fill will fully satisfy company's needs. Once a year ABB chooses its service providers in Zurich, Switzerland. Numerous vendors come with their offers for the negotiation round. Among them only two best service providers are selected. Selection criteria mainly cover areas of delivery speed and quality and ability to ship cargo globally in order to match up with ABB's business scale. In opposite to what was said by Vitale et al. (2011, 57.) Ms Nybergh underlined that ABB does not demand service providers to tailor their operation pro-

cesses to ABB's. All they require from their service providers is high quality on-time deliveries. On-time delivery coefficient is one of the core selection criteria for decision-making when choosing partners (in case of ABB it should be at least 95%). If promised level of quality is not provided as it was agreed ABB receives a credit note. Selecting service providers at ABB is conducted very thoroughly because as Ms Nybergh stated: "When customers see delivering company, they see ABB." It means that partner company is associated with ABB, so partner's values should match up with the values of ABB. Eco-efficiency can be an example. Ms Nybergh highlighted that apart from selecting service providers on the basis of prices they charge ABB also take into consideration corporate social responsibility.

Ms Nybergh also shortly described their operation routine once service providers were selected. For example ABB organizes its cooperation with logistics companies in a way that they come to pick up cargo two times per day every day without extra notification. They find it really efficient at ABB. In some extra-ordinary situations logistics department has a right to use services of other company rather than those selected once if they provide grounded reasoning for that afterwards. Service like DHL Express can be used at any time without further explanation.

Taking into consideration all her 23 years' experience at Logistics department Ms Nybergh summarized her recommendations concerning successful marketing materials targeted at company's logistics department. Here they are as follows:

- Text should be short and up to the point. People at work don't have time to read pages about services their company already uses.
- No mistakes in text. Mistakes in advertising give wrong first impression about the company.
- Language. While making advertising companies should always bear in mind the fact that decisions are taken sometimes by non-experts, thus language used in advertising brochure should be understandable for all the readers.
- More illustrations. It looks a lot nicer when there are more pictures rather than just plain text. In order to visualize information charts, graphs, diagrams can be used.
- Colors used should correspond with service provider's corporate colors.
- Paper. Often same copy of advertising brochure is read by several employees and this fact should be taken into consideration when choosing paper for printing. Coated paper defi-

nately looks nice but not when two-three employees left their fingerprints on it while reading.

- Advertising materials should not be too posh and expensive. Service providers should rather concentrate of quality of their services than spend money trying to impress target audience with expensive brochures. As it was mentioned by Ms Nybergh, many of those brochures won't get any answer for company sending them and it looks not really wise spending substantial part of company's funds in that direction.
- Being eco-friendly. Nowadays more and more companies try to be socially responsible, modify their operations so that they are friendly to the environment. ABB is one of those companies and they focus their attention on eco-friendly service providers because as it was explained by Ms Nybergh:"when receiving ABB product delivered by logistics company customer subconsciously associates logistics company with ABB. That is why it is very important for ABB what delivery men say to customers, how they look, what trucks they drive etc. In customer's mind logistics company becomes ABB."
- Contact information. Probably one of the most important elements of advertising material in general. When addressing target audience you should leave a possibility to be contacted very easily without holding the line or listening to answering machine. Contact information should be visible and easy to use.

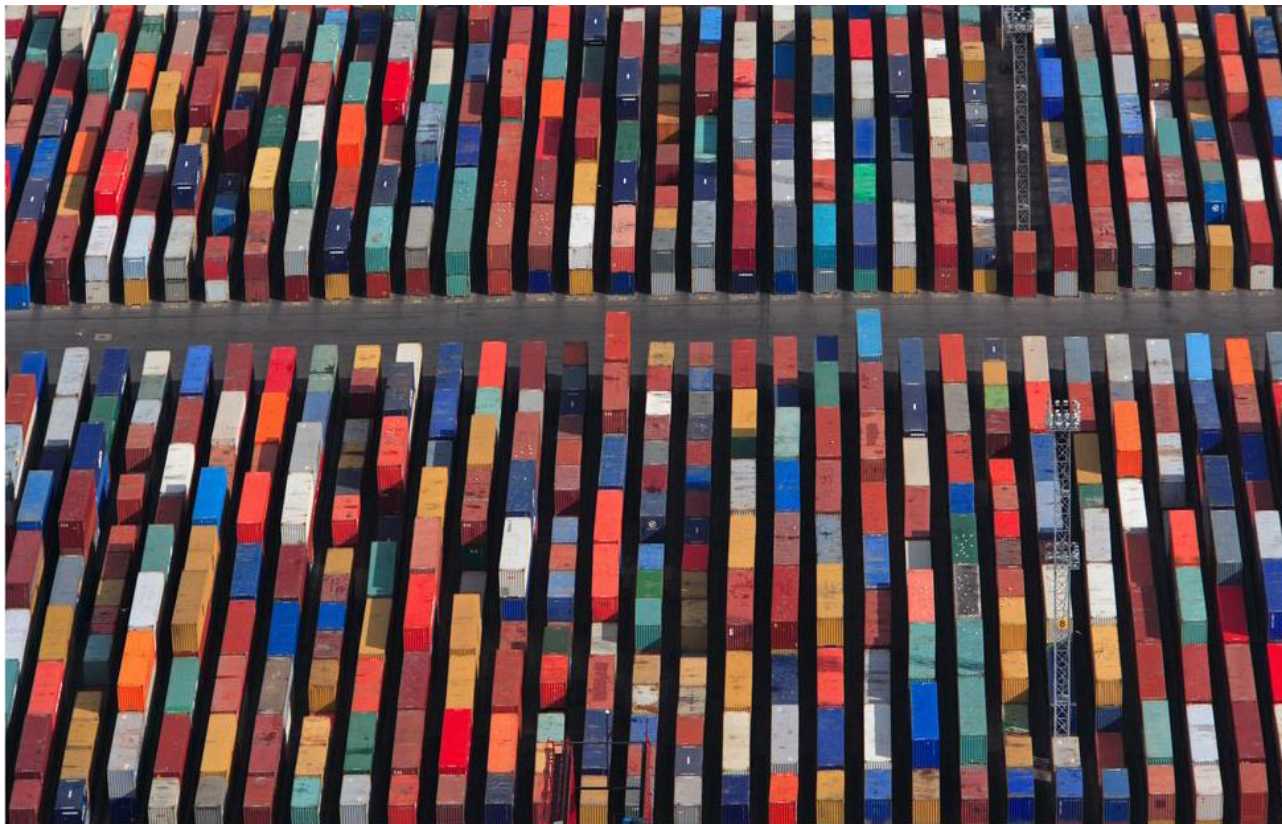
Based on data collected during the interview following conclusions can be made:

- First readers of marketing content from companies like a case company will be located within logistics department. It is strictly their decision if information goes further to their supervisors etc.
- Decision makers and users in buying centre are not necessarily located close by. Longer distances make it more challenging to judge clearly and take optimal decision.
- There is always a chance to be contacted by logistics departments of big companies on sporadic rather than regular basis unless service provider was nominated during negotiations' round.
- Potential customers might have high demands concerning service providers' performance and probably ask higher level of dedication to them.

- Service provider should always consider target audience's point of view when marketing own services. It is important to understand what attracts customer's attention, how does customer perceive information etc.
- Taking into consideration corporate values of target company is always a big help when looking for business partners. Mentioning eco-efficiency increases chances to match-up with perspective partners' values.







Attachments





Attachment 1. Front page of the brochure



UFICO
Reliable logistic partner

	<i>Reliable logistics partner</i> 
<div>Company information</div>	<p>UFICO Ltd is a Ukrainian-Finnish freight forwarding company, established in 2004 in Kiev. Cargo transports to and from Ukraine, local services and transports between third countries are our core competence area. By road, air, sea and their combinations, door to door.</p> <p>Our service portfolio includes also special shipments like projects, heavy and oversized items as well as exhibition shipments and valuables etc.</p> <p>We are specialised in transit cargo traffic to CIS destinations, from West Europe by trucking and from Far East and other continents by land - sea - land transportation via ports of Black Sea and Baltic Sea.</p> <p>Logistics services abroad we organize in close cooperation with our partner's world wide. The company's independent status makes it possible for us to choose the best partners and use the most competitive routing. To our customers' advantage.</p> <p>Our personnel have a long and wide experience in international and local forwarding and logistics services as well as a good knowledge of CIS conditions and regulations.</p> <p>The cornerstones in UFICO's operations are safe and in time deliveries, cost efficiency and client-orientated service. Let us know your logistics needs, we are pleased to propose you our solution.</p> <p><i>Yrjö Azarjeff</i> Managing Director</p>
	<div> <div>+380 44 4072344</div> <div>ufico@ufico.com.ua</div> </div>

	<i>Reliable logistics partner</i>	UFICO
Delivery modes	<div></div> <div></div> <div></div>	<p>UFICO offers high quality delivery services door-to door by land, air, sea or their combinations.</p> <p>Company portfolio includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-heavy and oversized items-projects and exhibitions delivery-valuables
	+380 44 4072344	ufico@ufico.com.ua

	<i>Reliable logistics partner</i> UFICO	
Extra service features		Safety/ security arrangements, police escorts, guardian, supervision
		Warehousing/ cargo storage
		Customs formalities
		Cargo insurance
	<div> +380 44 4072344 ufico@ufico.com.ua </div>	



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